

**What is Claimed:**

1. A method for compiling a query including an extensible markup language based expression, the method comprising:
  - transforming an abstract syntax tree corresponding to the expression into a unified tree including extensible markup language based algebra operations; and
  - mapping the extensible markup language based algebra operations in the unified tree to relational algebra based operations in a relational tree.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein transforming the abstract syntax tree comprises:
  - recursively traversing the abstract syntax tree;
  - generating a unified sub-tree for each abstract syntax tree node, the sub-tree including at least one corresponding extensible markup language based algebra operation; and
  - inserting the sub-tree into the unified tree.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein mapping the extensible markup language based algebra operations comprises:
  - recursively traversing the unified tree;
  - generating a relational sub-tree for each unified tree node, the sub-tree including at least one corresponding relational algebra based operation; and
  - inserting the sub-tree into the relational tree.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising parsing the query to yield the extensible markup language based expression.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising parsing the extensible markup language based expression to yield the abstract syntax tree.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising generating a query plan according to the relational tree.
7. The method of claim 6, further comprising submitting the query plan to a query processor for execution by the query processor.
8. The method of claim 1, comprising mapping the extensible markup language based algebra operations in the unified tree to relational algebra based operations with nested table abstraction in the relational tree.
9. A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 1.
10. A database engine for processing a query including an extensible markup language based expression, the database engine comprising:
  - an extensible markup language operation generator for transforming an abstract syntax tree corresponding to the expression into a unified tree including extensible markup language based algebra operations; and
  - an extensible markup language algebrizer for mapping the extensible markup language based algebra operations in the unified tree to relational algebra based operations in a relational tree.
11. The database engine of claim 10, further comprising a relational parser for parsing the query to yield the extensible markup language based expression.
12. The database engine of claim 10, further comprising an extensible markup language parser for parsing the extensible markup language based expression to yield the abstract syntax tree.
13. The database engine of claim 10, further comprising a query processor for executing the query according to a query plan generated from the relational tree.

14. The database engine of claim 10, wherein the extensible markup language operation generator transforms the abstract syntax tree by recursively traversing the abstract syntax tree; generating a unified sub-tree for each abstract syntax tree node, the sub-tree including at least one corresponding extensible markup language based algebra operation; and inserting the sub-tree into the unified tree.

15. The database engine of claim 10, wherein the extensible markup language algebraizer maps the extensible markup language based algebra operations by recursively traversing the unified tree; generating a relational sub-tree for each unified tree node, the sub-tree including at least one corresponding relational algebra based operation; and inserting the sub-tree into the relational tree.

16. A method for compiling a query, the method comprising:  
parsing the query to yield an extensible markup language based expression;  
and  
generating a query plan for the expression including enhanced relational algebra expressions with a nested table abstraction operation.

17. The method of claim 16, comprising generating a query plan for the expression including enhanced relational algebra expressions with a nested table abstraction operation that is one of a row nesting operation, a nested table expansion, a nested row expansion, and a nested row descendant expansion.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein generating the query plan comprises:  
parsing the expression to yield an abstract syntax tree;  
transforming the abstract syntax tree into a unified tree including extensible markup language based algebra operations; and  
mapping the extensible markup language based algebra operations in the unified tree to relational algebra based operations in a relational tree.

19. A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 16.
20. A database engine comprising:  
a relational parser for parsing a query to yield an extensible markup language based expression; and  
an extensible markup language algebrizer for generating a query plan for the expression including enhanced relational algebra expressions with a nested table abstraction operation.
21. The database engine of claim 20, wherein the nested table abstraction operation is one of a row nesting operation, a nested table expansion, a nested row expansion, and a nested row descendant expansion.
22. The database engine of claim 20, further comprising:  
an extensible markup language parser for parsing the expression to yield an abstract syntax tree; and  
an extensible markup language operation generator for transforming the abstract syntax tree into a unified tree including extensible markup language based algebra operations.
23. The database engine of claim 22, wherein the extensible markup language algebrizer maps the extensible markup language based algebra operations in the unified tree to relational algebra based operations in a relational tree.